

# **SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY CHILDREN'S NETWORK**

## **Policy Council Minutes January 22, 2003**

### **Members/Representatives Present:**

- Anthony Rubio, Children's Network
- VaNessa Vollmer, DBH – Children's Network
- Susan Melanson, Children's Network
- Claudia Spencer, Department of Public Health
- Bonnie O'Connor, Children's Fund
- Rudy Lopez, Department of Behavioral Health
- MaryLyn Clark, Inland Regional Center
- Eric Frykman, Department of Public Health
- Charlie Adams, Community Services Department
- Paula Roby, Department of Behavioral Health
- Joyce Lewis, Department of Behavioral Health
- Kent Paxton, Children's Network Officer
- Bruce Davis, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Board of Supervisors Representative
- Honorable Rex Victor, Juvenile Court
- Carol Anselmi, HSS Administration
- Cathy Cimbalo, Director of Children's Services
- Don Larkin, First 5 San Bernardino
- Dave Larsen, County ECD
- Terry Kramer, Department of Behavioral Health
- Gerald Farber, Public Defender Office
- Jeronimo Breen, Department of Behavioral Health
- Karen Bell, District Attorney
- Mel Rinewalt, Probation Department
- Jane Lawrence, Public Defender Office
- Nancy Amaral, Grand Jury
- Nathandra Joseph, Grand Jury
- Dennis Zimmerman, Grand Jury
- Bonnie Konowitch, Children's Network
- Mandi Batalo, SB County Library
- Edward Rowe, Children's Network
- Ruth Stringer, County Counsel
- Andy Gruchy, Department of Behavioral Health
- Tammy Williams, Children's Network

Children's Network Policy Council  
January 22, 2003

The meeting of the Children's Network Policy Council was called to order at 12:05 p.m. and convened by Honorable Rex Victor in the Citrus Room, fifth floor, County Government Center.

## **1.0 Welcome and Introductions**

Honorable Rex Victor welcomed those present and self-introductions were made.

## **2.0 Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made to approve the agenda as read.

## **3.0 Approval of November Minutes**

The November 27, 2002 minutes were approved as submitted.

## **4.0 Information Items**

### **4.1 Children's Fund Report**

Bonnie O'Connor reported the Christmas celebration went very well. They took on the Department of Children's Services Sugar Plum project ensuring that all of the children in foster care received Christmas gifts. They were able to serve 26,000 children by providing them with 42,000 toys for the Christmas celebration. Cathy Cimbalo thanked Bonnie O'Connor and her staff on a great Sugar Plum project and said she has not heard one negative comment from her staff. It also saved Cathy Cimbalo's staff numerous hours for the Sugar Plum project. Bonnie was thankful to have one position funded by Cathy's budget to assist in the Sugar Plum project. Bonnie reported they are now starting to gear up for the annual Duck Race.

### **4.2 Children's Network Annual Report Distribution**

Susan Melanson reported everyone should have received a copy of the Children's Network 2002 Annual Report. Please note there is one correction, see the inserted page 78. Please let us know if you need more hard copies. The report is also on our web site [www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/childnet](http://www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/childnet). You will find the format different this year with the data in the back.

Susan gave a brief update on the Child Abuse Prevention campaign: The Shine the Light Breakfast is on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 a.m. at the Ontario Double Tree. The cost is \$10 per ticket. You will find in your packet a nomination form.

Susan encouraged the participants to talk to their staff about nominating a person to be recognized for their excellent work with families. The deadline for the nominations is **February 4<sup>th</sup>**. Last years' nominees will be getting together to select the nominees for this year on **February 20<sup>th</sup>**. The materials distribution will be like the Safe Kids method, similar to what was done last year. Materials will be distributed to meetings, events, etc. Departments will be asked to take a master copy and make copies from them for distribution purposes. The Family Celebration picnics are cancelled this year due to sensitivity of the budget crisis. The Guasti committee will participate and provide activities in conjunction with Children's Fund annual duck race. The Mojave Committee has decided to continue and have their own event. Local businesses are being contacted to see if they will honor children during the month of April by giving tickets for miniature golf, Chuck-E-Cheese, bowling, etc. Children's Network staff will compile a resource listing of agencies that would have participated in the picnics and to provide those as a handout with our campaign materials.

#### **4.3 Children's System of Care Update**

Rudy Lopez reported that lots of the mental health services could be reduced due to the Governor's proposed budget realignment. At this point, it doesn't appear the CSOC is included in the budget cuts. Kent, Paula Roby, and Andy Gruchy are working on the DBH Strategic Plan to include children's services in the overall plan. Some more good news is the Board of Supervisors approved the EPSDT contracts and may expand to provide a variety of network services in schools.

Kent Paxton gave the following update: He will be working with Focus Groups and Stakeholders for a 2 to 3 month process soliciting input from staff about children at risk for DBH services, etc. Everyone from Policy Council will be invited to the first Focus Group on **February 19, 2003, 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. at the Department of Children's Services – Administrative Resources Division, 825 E. Hospitality Lane, San Bernardino**. Kent mentioned there have also been meetings on group home needs assessments for RCL 14 beds in this county and he will keep you informed of the process.

Kent mentioned that Ed Rowe continuously works to increase participation in the Family Preservation Councils to improve the outcomes for children – please see the FPC STATS in your packet.

#### **4.4 Early Learning Opportunities Update**

Anthony Rubio, County Child Care Coordinator and Dr. VaNessa Vollmer gave a presentation on the Early Learning Opportunities Federal grant. They gave out several handouts and presented a slide show. The ELO grant is a one million dollar grant from the Federal Government with 10-targeted childcare sites. The 10 sites are a variety such as perinatal, profit and non-profit. Parent reps. were hired to work at each site. A brief overview of the program to date was made with a major focus on the ELO Juvenile Hall Survey Results. The survey was conducted last summer of 329 adolescents in Juvenile Hall with a variety of questions and outcomes discussed. The purpose of the survey was to develop some feedback on what is needed for the at-risk population such as; provide substance abuse treatment in Juvenile Hall, provide early diagnosis of children with learning disabilities, teach coping mechanisms and provide special education interventions, etc.

Kent mentioned the ELO work is exactly where we need to be to deal with children being kicked out of preschool. These youth need early identification and intervention so they won't end up in Juvenile Hall and/or a psychiatric ward. Kent thanked Dr. Vollmer, Anthony Rubio and Dr. McWain for their hard work. The ELO federal grant was extended to provide direct services until February 2004.

#### **4.5 Grant Search Priorities**

Bonnie Konowitch of Children's Network has been a Grant Writer for the past 9 years. Bonnie announced a conference, 'We Care America' in Diamond Bar on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of positioning agencies to seek governmental funding; she suggested it would be a worthwhile conference. Our priority for 2003 is to maximize funds and interagency fiscal teams to leverage funds for the community. This county has been able to get awarded millions of dollars in grant funding over the past years. Bonnie referred everyone to the survey in his or her packet. She asked how she can be of assistance such as; provide resources, find stats and data, networking at meetings, assist county agencies to partner and collaborate to leverage the most funding possible, etc. She provided a form to be filled out and returned to her with information on funding needs.

Bonnie and other Children's Network staff will be meeting with Jose Marquez of the California Endowment about other funding opportunities.

## **5.0 Discussion/Action Items**

### **5.1 Children's Network 2003 Priorities Discussion and action is requested to approve the Children's Network priorities for 2003**

Kent Paxton reported our facilitator for this project Denise Walker was not able to make it to the meeting today, but he was able to meet with her and go over the brainstorming ideas this group had developed. Kent referred everyone to their packets for the listing of the 2003 Priorities. The consolidated ideas were reviewed and discussed. It was mentioned that due to the budget crisis it would be better: to collaborate and network with existing services in the community; identify gaps of service; maximize funding by leverage and braiding; look at Grant applications that match in-kind support, etc. A suggestion was made to set up an ongoing fiscal team with Carol Anselmi's assistance to report to this group. A motion was made to approve the priority list.

Kent mentioned Dr. Bruce Smith would come and speak next month about the Perinatal Coalition and the work they are doing.

There was some discussion about the need for parenting classes in the community. Susan will be sending out a survey on parenting issues. Possibly parenting drop in centers could be developed where parents can meet in group situations with therapists and other parents to obtain support for immediate issues. Suggestions made were to gear the parent survey to more at-risk families, and to identify the difference in parenting classes for parents of young children and adolescents, etc. Kent mentioned that possibly if parents are given support it might prevent some out of home placements of at risk children.

It was mentioned that Children's Network does involve the faith-based and non-profits in the community through the CBO Partnership Program which provides: surplus property; the Resource Center; and staff that lead some of the Children's Network monthly collaborative meetings.

## **6.0 Public Comment**

Terry Kramer from Department of Behavioral Health reported for the last 6 months Department of Behavioral Health has had as an experiment with walk in clinics to target children on Medi-Cal to expedite access and screening for appointments. The children and adults are screened carefully and given resources at the walk in clinics. Terry agreed to provide the group with a list of the walk in clinics.

The Grand Jury members present thanked the group for the invitation to participate at the Policy Council meetings.

Members were encouraged to save the date for the February 25<sup>th</sup>, Drowning Prevention Conference at Loma Linda University Medical Center. Everyone was given a handout with more information in his or her packet. Awareness of drowning prevention is believed to reduce the number of drowning.

## **7.0 Adjournment**

**The next regularly scheduled meeting will be February 26, 2003.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Williams  
Children's Network Policy Council Recording Secretary